Questions & Answers from October 11th RWC

Q: Will the CRIS public search website still be available after the official transition is made to REEport?

A: Yes. The current public search functions (CRIS Professional Search and CRIS Assisted Search) are search tools that access data from a central database. The deployment of REEport will do nothing to change this database. Essentially, REEport changes the manner in which data are collected, but it does not change the fact that there is still a central database it feeds data into. Those data will still be available via the "CRIS Search" online option.

Q: Will Site Admins in REEport receive emails when CRIS forms and/or reports are ready in the queue for editing and/or submission?

A: Yes. REEport has been designed to automatically alert Project Directors, AORs, and Site Admins of various scenarios regarding project initiations, progress reports, submission deadlines, etc.; note that the email triggers are different if a project is formula or non-formula. NIFA will share a chart during a future reporting web conference and/or training session of exactly what emails will be sent and when.

Q: I have a project in CRIS that I do not want carried over into REEport. Is the best way to handle those projects to submit a termination AD-421?

A: Generally speaking, yes, one way to handle this would be to submit a termination AD-421 in CRIS to ensure that your project is terminated and not carried over into REEport. However, anyone in this situation is encouraged to contact NIFA via the REEport/CRIS hotline (202-690-0009 to explain your specific situation and ensure you are submitting the correct forms at the right time.

Q: Please confirm: This year (FY13) AD-421s are due April 1 in CRIS, and the new deadline for REEport Progress Reports (FY14) will be due March 1. Correct?

A: Yes. The new March 1 due date for progress reports in REEport (old AD-421s) will not take effect until REEport is deployed, which is not planned to occur until after April 1, 2013.

Q: Will Site Admins receive instructions on how to set up their sites? If so, when?

A: Yes. NIFA will cover some basic instructions and links to guidance documents/resources during the December Reporting Web Conference. In addition, NIFA will be providing specific, more detailed training to Site Admins during online training sessions that are currently planned for January-February 2013.

Q: Why are Site Admins being asked to update Project Director full names and email addresses for active projects prior to the official switch from CRIS to REEport? This information is entered in the AD-416, so shouldn't it carry over?

A: Unfortunately, due to the manner in which the data from the AD-416 is stored in the CRIS database for active projects, there is no way REEport can "read" those data correctly and carry them over into the new system. NIFA does regret this added burden to the Site Admins and apologizes for the inconvenience.

Q: When updating the first names and email addresses for Project Directors on active projects (as being requested by NIFA), does that mean ONLY the primary PD? What about the second through sixth individuals named on the project?

A: We are only asking that you update the primary PD on active projects. We will not, at any point, be asking you to update Co-PDs/other individuals on the project.

Q: Can you clarify what the OGFM Supplemental forms are that can be submitted via the Plan of Work system in 2013?

A: The forms are the NIFA-REPT and the NIFA-PLAN for Multistate Integrated and Extension Activities, along with the Brief Summaries document, that are currently sent in via email to the Office of Grants and Financial Management (Jharana Sahu and Brenda Barnett). These forms are required by law as supplements to the Plan of Work and Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results. In order to provide a more streamlined process in FY13, NIFA will be providing you the ability to upload these forms into the POW software for submission along with your POW and Annual Report. However, FY13 will also serve as a grace period for any state wishing to still submit these forms via email.

Q: Will we be required to complete/submit data for the National Outcomes & Indicators in the Plan of Work system in 2013?

A: No. The submission of any data having to do with the National Outcomes & Indicators (NOIs) is completely voluntary. There will be absolutely no penalties or sanctions of any kind against any institution that choose not to report data for the NOIs. However, if you have the data available or have programs related to the NOIs, NIFA strongly encourages states to report data where they have it; this will bolster the "formula fund story" and help NIFA create stronger outcome and impact statements to submit to Congress, OMB, and other important agencies/organizations.

Q: When will the NOI for Youth, Families, and Communities be available?

A: The NIFA NPLs who have taken the lead for developing these with their stakeholders are in the final stages of refining these NOIs. We plan to post them to our website end of October – first week in November.